

B. 12. 51

Sketch
of
Mrs. T. C. Doremus

By

Mrs. J. J. Gracey

PRICE TWO CENTS

Woman's Foreign Missionary Society
Methodist Episcopal Church
36 Bromfield Street, Boston, Mass.

MRS. T. C. DOREMUS

“Her Life is Her Eulogy.”

“Yet speaketh! By that consecrated life,
The single-hearted, noble, true and pure,
Which, lifted far above all worldly strife,
Could all but sin so patiently endure.
O eloquence! By this she speaketh yet,
For who that knew and loved her could
forget?”

ON a bright and beautiful Sabbath morning in the month of May, 1868, the steamer *City of Paris* arrived in New York, having among her passengers a missionary and his family returning from India. Among the first persons to board the steamer was a lady tall in figure, somewhat bent in form, with hair of silvery whiteness, and a face with sweet and saintly expression. This was the subject of our sketch, and she was there to welcome the missionary and his family after an absence of seven years from home and native land. In our distant home in India we had received many a kind and encouraging word from her pen, and substantial aid for carrying on work among the women, but had never looked upon her dear face until that hour; and to her loving care we made an unconditional surrender. Meeting the custom house officer she simply said, “These are my friends, missionaries from India, they have nothing contraband,” and passing out we were put into her carriage and driven to the home of our friends. What she did for us was only what she had done for many other returning missionaries.

It is a very difficult matter to analyze the life of one you have known and loved, particularly when that life is very symmetrical, and complete. Mrs. Doremus' life in any aspect, intellectually, socially or religiously, is a lesson and a treasure to the women of every country, for the wise may be made wiser, and the good better, by considering it. There is only one solution of it. Her whole nature and all its possibilities were at the bidding of a Master whom she loved and in whose service she was spent.

She was well born, her parents being among the most honored families of the city of New York, and members of the Presbyterian Church. In her early childhood they removed to Elizabeth, N. J., where she grew up under the training of one of the noblest of Christian mothers, a woman of saintly excellence. In 1821 she married a Christian merchant of New York, and returned to that city, where she spent the remainder of her life. She was a communicant of the Reformed Dutch Church, but her catholic spirit knew no dividing lines.

Possibly no woman in our country has left her mark more distinctly. She was a woman of strong, independent mind. With her, work meant work. Her greatest happiness was in making others happy, though it often involved trouble to herself. She would rather have gone forth with Martha to meet Jesus, than to have sat in the house with Mary.

Mrs. Doremus received her first interest in the cause of foreign missions, when, as a child, her mother would take her to meetings held by herself and a few Christian friends, to pray for the conversion of the world.

As interest in foreign mission work developed, and organizations were formed in the churches, she who had learned to love the work as a child, threw her heart and soul into it, and it was her delight to serve the cause and the missionaries. As the appliances for securing or purchasing ready-made

clothing were not then what they are now, the ladies of various congregations met together to prepare outfits for missionaries. Many of these were made in her own home, the material freely given and cut out by her own skilful fingers. Then, as a missionary's departure in those days meant a long voyage of months, sometimes in wretchedly furnished ships, often has she gone to Boston, the usual place of embarkation, and not only fitted up the miserable cabins with comforts for the voyage, but with her own hands made tempting delicacies to sustain the messengers of Jesus, whom, for his sake, she took into her great heart, regardless of denomination.

In 1834 the Rev. David Abeel, returning from his mission in the East, had determined to arouse Christian women to their duty to rescue heathen women from degradation. He organized in England the "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," from which the Union Society took its model. He attempted to accomplish a similar work in this country. Mrs. Doremus entered into the plans with great zeal, but the opposition of existing Boards made it expedient to postpone the organization. The time had not come. A quarter of a century passed, and the way was being prepared for some connected action. About 1859 or '60, Mrs. Mason, a missionary of Burma, visited this country and told the story of the woes and wants of heathen women, anxious to awaken an interest among American women in their behalf. These appeals resulted in the formation of the Woman's Union Missionary Society. This Society embraced all evangelical denominations of Christian women, and it worked independently of church Boards. Its direct object was to form an agency whereby unmarried women might be sent abroad as teachers and missionaries, to enter the homes and carry the gospel to those who could not receive it in any other way.

This undertaking was a great experiment, and it

needed the wisest and most judicious administration. The women of the churches were to be brought together, collections made so as not to interfere with existing organizations, general missionary intelligence disseminated, and a missionary enthusiasm kindled all over the country, if the venture was to be successful.

Naturally Mrs. Doremus was elected the president of this organization. She threw her life and soul into the work. She was ubiquitous. With personal presence and with pen she inspired everyone with her own zeal and devotion. Her beautiful home in New York was the headquarters of the mission. Every missionary appointed was her special charge. She not only welcomed them to her home but when strangers to the city, gave them every opportunity of seeing places and people of note. Then when they left or returned to this country, how tender was her parting or welcome! How many touching tokens of personal self-denial she surrounded them with! In her correspondence with them, as far as possible, she carefully avoided business details, but wrote as a mother might have done. She would glean items of daily interest and sketches of lectures to send them, that something fresh from their native land might give variety to their lives of arduous toil. No event of public importance transpired that she did not send copies of newspapers to all the stations. Then she was always on the outlook for inspiring books, which she sent to them by mail, feeling that all that cheered their lives would strengthen them for duty.

For fifteen years she held the position of president of the society. She loved it, nurtured it, prayed for it, and saw it grow and develop, and saw also one denomination after another get strength sufficient to organize independently.

It was during the early history of this society that Mrs. Doremus became the link connecting the Union

Missionary Society with our Methodist women. In the early history of our Methodist Mission in North India, work was attempted among women and girls, but the need was felt of special help to prosecute the work more fully. Soon after the writer arrived in India, a letter was received from Mrs. Doremus stating the fact of the organization of the Woman's Union Missionary Society, and inclosing a check for fifty dollars for the employment of some native Christian woman as Bible reader or teacher. *This was the first donation made for distinctive woman's work in the North India Conference.*

This remittance came regularly each year, and when in 1867, the writer left India, it was made over to one of our ladies in Lucknow, and aided greatly in carrying on work in that important but bigoted city.

The work she accomplished in New York City was enough to engage the time and thoughts of any ordinary woman. She began a Sabbath service in the city prison, from which was developed the Women's Prison Association with which she was connected for more than thirty years. For thirty-six years she was a manager of the City and Tract Mission Society, and for twenty-eight years a manager of the City Bible Society. She was one of the founders of the House and School of Industry, and for twenty-three years was connected with the "Nursery and Child's Hospital," which she aided in founding.

In 1835 she bent her energies to the establishment of the Woman's Hospital, the first institution of this character in the world. To this she devoted time and personal sacrifice, went repeatedly to Albany to secure its charter and state appropriation, and collected large sums for it. She visited the patients regularly, cheered them up, gave them spiritual comfort, and followed them with her ministrations after they left. She assisted in organizing also the Presbyterian Home for Aged Women. During

our Civil War she was most active in work for our soldiers.

Not often is a Christian woman permitted to see the germs planted in faith grow up within a lifetime, into overshadowing institutions of healing for soul and body, but many such owe their origin to her patient labors and far-reaching influence. Winning by her life the highest confidence of the community, means and facilities to a remarkable extent were placed at her disposal, and in this way her efficiency was multiplied a hundred-fold.

If we turn from her activities in mission work to the sacred sanctuary of her home, we find the devoted wife and mother. Home was the scene of her tender and loving care. The mind that could have ruled a kingdom gave its best energies to her family. She lived with her children, painting, designing her own pattern for embroidery, modeling in wax, and excelling in all the accomplishments of her day. Nothing was ever allowed to interfere with her high and holy home duties. To her own family of nine children she was all that a mother could be. In addition to these she adopted children into her heart and home, caring for them, and securing means for their education.

Much of what she accomplished was due to the very rare combination of her endowments. She had power to lay great plans and organize grand movements, and withal, a marvellous memory for details. Nothing was too trivial to be overlooked if it would add perfection to the organization. To her latest day her memory was true to its trust for dates and incidents, every one of which was accurate and thoroughly at her command, and all used for the benefit and comfort of others. From the very beginning of her Christian life her many beautiful gifts, her rare intelligence, her dauntless will, were all consecrated to the service of her Redeemer, and thenceforth transfused by the Spirit, were quickened into ever brightening emanations of loving activities.

But there came a time when these ceaseless loving ministrations must cease, when the busy brain must stop, when she should hear the summons, "It is enough, Come up higher." Prostrated by an accident in her own home, in January, 1877, she suffered for a week, and then was translated to see Him of whom Moses, in the law and prophets, did write—the King Immortal, the one whom she loved and for whom she had toiled.

There was sorrow in hearts, and homes, and in churches, as the news of her death spread, not only in this country, but throughout the world, for there was scarcely a mission field where she was not known and lovingly remembered. Missionaries felt that they had lost one of their best friends. The Rev. Dr. Tyng said in his address at her funeral, "Mrs. Doremus gave the whole of herself to the Lord, the whole of herself to the church, the whole of herself to every suffering heart she met, and yet the whole of herself to home and children."

The Union Missionary Society has perpetuated her name in Calcutta, India, by calling their Home the "Doremus Home," but she lives to-day not only in the hearts of thousands of Christian people in this land, but in all lands, her name is as ointment poured forth.

Her daily prayer was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" We can offer the same, and though not having the diversity of gifts that this consecrated woman had, yet we can do our part in helping the on-coming of our Redeemer's Kingdom.

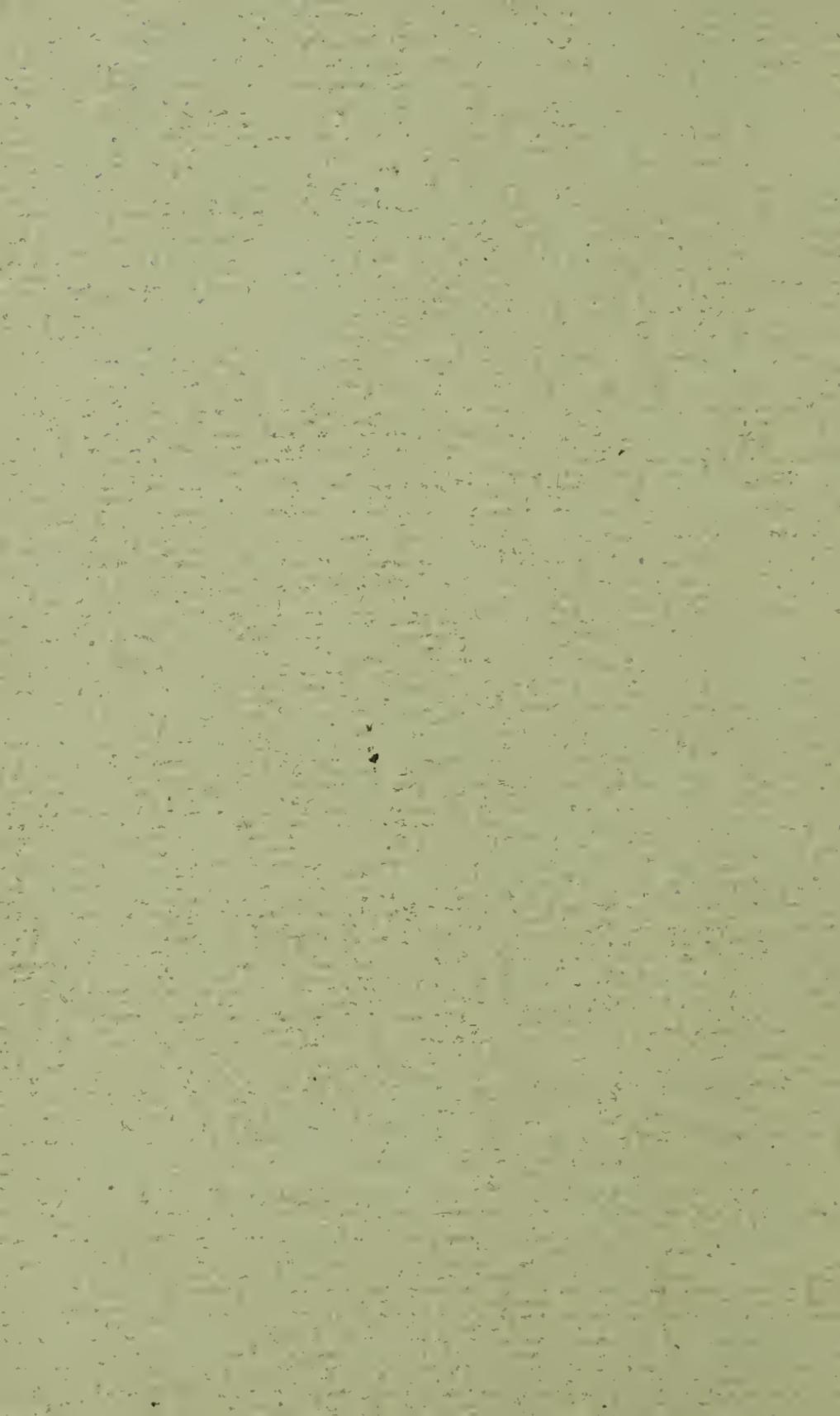
228

SKETCH
OF
MRS. T. C. DOREMUS

BY
MRS. J. T. GRACEY.

PRICE THREE CENTS.

PUBLISHED BY
WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
36 BROMFIELD ST., BOSTON, MASS.



MRS. T. C. DOREMUS.

“Her life is her eulogy.”

“Yet speaketh! By that consecrated life,
The single-hearted, noble, true and pure,
Which, lifted far above all worldly strife,
Could all but sin so patiently endure.
O Eloquence! By this she speaketh yet,
For who that knew and loved her could forget?”

CN a bright and beautiful Sabbath morning in the month of May, 1868, the steamer *City of Paris* arrived in New York, having among her passengers a missionary and his family returning from India. Among the first persons to board the steamer was a lady tall in figure, somewhat bent in form, with hair of silvery whiteness, and a face with sweet and saintly expression. This was the subject of our sketch, and she was there to welcome the missionary and his family after an absence of seven years from home and native land. In our distant home in India we had received many a kind and encouraging word from her pen, and substantial aid for carrying on work among the women, but had never looked upon her dear face until that hour; and to her loving care we made an unconditional surrender. Passing the custom house

officer she simply said "these are my friends, missionaries from India, they have nothing contraband," and passing out we were put into her carriage and driven to the home of our friends. What she did for us, was only what she had done for many other returning missionaries.

It is a very difficult matter to analyze the life of one you have known and loved, particularly when that life is very symmetrical, and complete. Mrs. Doremus' life in any aspect, intellectually, socially or religiously, is a lesson and a treasure to the women of every country, for the wise may be made wiser, and the good better, by considering it. There is only one solution of it. Her whole nature and all its possibilities were at the bidding of a Master whom she loved and in whose service she was spent.

She was born well. Her parents were among the most honored families of the city of New York, and members of the Presbyterian church. In her early childhood they removed to Elizabeth, N. J., where she grew up under the training of one of the noblest of Christian mothers, a woman of saintly excellence. In 1821 she married a Christian merchant of New York, and returned to that city, where she spent the remainder of her life. She was a communicant of the Reformed Dutch Church, but her catholic spirit knew no dividing lines. She belonged to all churches, to all Christians. She was in the truest sense cultivated, having a culture that had its springs not only in family and education, but in a full and pure surrender of her life to Christ and his work. She was rooted and grounded in faith; she searched and found the

Rock and her feet were firmly placed upon it, and her foundations were sure as the everlasting hills. Her benevolence was as broad as her sympathies, not limited to rank or intelligence, creed or character. She loved all and helped all. She did not live in herself, or for herself. God and his children, their sorrows and their burdens, and how she might help lift them, filled her soul.

Possibly no woman in our country has left her mark more distinctly. She was a woman of strong independent mind. With her, work meant work. Her greatest happiness was in making others happy, though it often involved trouble to herself. She would rather have gone forth with Martha to meet Jesus, than to have sat in the house with Mary.

It is her connection with foreign missions with which we are more particularly interested. Mrs. Doremus received her first interest in the cause of foreign missions, when, as a child, her mother would take her to meetings held by herself and a few Christian friends, to pray for the conversion of the world.

She was, without doubt, one of the most intelligent women of her time, on missionary subjects. As interest in foreign mission work developed, and organizations were formed in the churches, she who had learned to love the work as a child, threw her heart and soul into it, and it was her delight to serve the cause and the missionaries. As the appliances for securing or purchasing ready-made clothing were not then what they are now, the ladies of various congregations met together to prepare outfits for missionaries. Many of these were prepared in her own home, the material

freely given and cut out by her own skilful fingers. Then, as a missionary's departure in those days meant a long voyage of months, sometimes in wretchedly furnished ships, often has she gone to Boston, the usual place of embarkation, and not only fitted up the miserable cabins with comforts for the voyage, but with her own hands made tempting delicacies to sustain the messengers of Jesus, whom, for His sake, she took into her great heart, regardless of denomination.

ORGANIZED WORK FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

Although Mrs. Doremus was over fifty-three years a communicant of the South Reformed Dutch Church, yet her broad catholic spirit knew no sect, no dividing lines. They were all melted away in the light of the truth she loved and lived by — the oneness of all believers in Christ.

In 1828 the sympathies of our country were stirred for Greece, so outraged by the Turks. Mrs. Doremus, hearing of the necessities of the Greek ladies, with several friends organized a band to work for their relief. Dr. Jonas King was invited to go to Athens as their representative, taking large supplies.

In 1835 she became deeply interested in MDE. FELLER'S BAPTIST MISSION AT GRANDE LIGNE, CANADA. In aid of this, a Society was formed in New York, of which she was President. Many were the boxes of school apparatus, delicacies, and useful stores which were sent regularly to cheer the hearts of those in that isolated and needy mission.

In 1834, the Rev. David Abeel, returning from his mission in the East, had determined to arouse Christian women to their duty to rescue heathen women from degradation. He organized in England the "Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," from which the Union Society has taken its model. He attempted to accomplish a similar work in this country. Mrs. Doremus entered into the plans with great zeal, but the opposition of existing Boards made it expedient to postpone the organization. The time had not come. The women of the churches were not ready for it. Sufficient knowledge of the condition of Eastern woman had not reached the Christian women of America for them to have their hearts touched and aroused to action. A quarter of a century passed, and the way was being prepared for some connected action. Missionaries plead for help. Influences had been exerted by missionaries abroad, and by those returning home. About 1859 or '60, Mrs. Mason, a missionary of Burmah, visited this country and told the story of the woes and wants of heathen women, anxious to awaken an interest among American women in their behalf. These appeals resulted in the formation of the "*Woman's Union Missionary Society.*" This Society embraced all evangelical denominations of Christian women, and it worked independently of Church Boards. Its direct object was to form an agency whereby unmarried women might be sent abroad as teachers and missionaries, to enter the homes and carry the gospel to those who could not receive it in any other way.

This undertaking was a great experiment, and it needed the wisest and most judicious administration. The women of the churches were to be brought together, collections made so as not to interfere with existing organizations, general missionary intelligence disseminated, and a missionary enthusiasm kindled all over the country, if the venture was to be successful.

Naturally and wisely Mrs. Doremus was elected the President of this organization. She threw her life and soul into the work. She was ubiquitous. With personal presence and with pen she inspired everyone with her own zeal and devotion. Her beautiful home in New York was the headquarters of the Mission. Every missionary appointed was her special charge. She not only welcomed them to her home but when strangers to the city, gave them every opportunity of seeing places and people of note. Then when they left or returned to this country, how tender was her parting or welcome! How many touching tokens of personal self-denial she surrounded them with! In her correspondence with them, as far as possible, she carefully avoided business details, but wrote as a mother might have done. She would glean items of daily interest and sketches of lectures to send them, that something fresh from their native land might give variety to their lives of arduous toil. No event of public importance transpired that she did not send copies of newspapers to all the stations. Then she was always on the outlook for inspiring books, which she sent to them by mail, feeling that all that cheered their lives would strengthen them for duty.

For fifteen years she held the position of President of the Society. She loved it, nurtured it, prayed for it, and saw it grow and develop, and saw also one denomination after another get strength sufficient to leave the Mother Branch and organize independently. She saw this organization started, but she could not see the grand results, for after thirty years the united contributions of the various woman's societies of America amounted last year to the magnificent sum of one and one-half millions of dollars.

It was during the early history of this society that Mrs. D. became the link connecting the Union Society with our Methodist women. In the early history of our Methodist Mission in North India, work was attempted among women and girls, but the need was felt of special help to prosecute the work more fully. Soon after the writer arrived in India, a letter was received from Mrs. Doremus stating the fact of the organization of the Woman's Union Missionary Society, and inclosing a check for fifty dollars for the employment of some native Christian woman as Bible reader or teacher. *This was the first donation made for distinctive woman's work in the North India Conference.*

There lies before me a note, penned by the hand of Mrs. Doremus, written in 1864, in which she inclosed the annual remittance. The kindly sympathising word always accompanied the money. In this note she says:—

“ You have my warmest love and sympathy in your missionary work * * * I inclose the check and wish it were ten times more.”

This remittance came regularly each year, and when in 1867 the writer left India, it was made over to one of our ladies in Lucknow, and aided greatly in carrying on work in that important but bigoted city. This was the beginning of a work in India that now receives annually an appropriation of about seventy thousand dollars.

The work she accomplished in New York city was enough to engage the time and thoughts of any ordinary woman. Nearly fifty years ago she began a Sabbath service in the city prison, from which was developed the "*Women's Prison Association*" with which she was connected for more than thirty years. For thirty-six years she was a manager of the City and Tract Mission Society, and for twenty-eight years a manager of the City Bible Society. She was one of the founders of the "House and School of Industry," and for twenty-three years was connected with the "Nursery and Child's Hospital," which she aided in founding.

In 1835 she bent her energies to the establishment of the "Woman's Hospital," the first institution of this character in the world. To this she devoted time and personal sacrifice, went repeatedly to Albany to secure its charter and State appropriation, and collected large sums for it. She visited the patients regularly, cheered them up, gave them spiritual comfort, and followed them with her ministrations after they left. She assisted in organizing also the "Presbyterian Home for Aged Women." During our civil war she was most active in work for our soldiers.

Not often is a Christian woman permitted to see the germs planted in faith grow up within a lifetime, into overshadowing institutions of healing for soul and body, but many such owe their origin to her patient labors and far-reaching influence. Winning by her life the highest confidence of the community, means and facilities to a remarkable extent were placed at her disposal, and in this way her efficiency was multiplied a hundred-fold.

If we turn from her activities in mission work to the sacred sanctuary of her home, we find the devoted wife and mother. Home was the scene of her tender and loving care. The mind that could have ruled a kingdom gave its best energies to her family. She lived with her children, painting, designing her own patterns for embroidery, modeling in wax, and excelling in all the accomplishments of her day. Nothing was ever allowed to interfere with her high and holy home duties. To her own family of nine children she was all that a mother could be. In addition to these she adopted children into her heart and home, caring for them, and securing means for their education.

Much of what she accomplished was due to the very rare combination of her endowments. She had power to lay great plans and organize grand movements, and withal, a marvellous memory for details. Nothing was too trivial to be overlooked if it would add perfection to the organization. To her latest day her memory was true to its trust for dates and incidents, every one of which was accurate and thoroughly at her command, and all used for the benefit and comfort of others. From the very beginning of her

Christian life her many beautiful gifts, her rare intelligence, her dauntless will, were all consecrated to the service of her Redeemer, and thenceforth transfused, by His Spirit, were quickened into ever brightening emanations of loving activities.

But there came a time when these ceaseless loving ministrations must cease, when the busy brain must stop, when she should hear the summons, "It is enough, Come up higher." Prostrated by an accident in her own home, in January, 1877, she suffered for a week, and then was translated to see Him of whom Moses, in the law and prophets, did write—the King Immortal, the one whom she loved and for whom she had toiled.

There was sorrow in hearts, and homes, and in churches, as the news of her death spread, not only in this country, but throughout the world, for there was scarcely a Mission field where she was not known and lovingly remembered. Missionaries felt that they had lost one of their best friends. The Rev. Dr. Tyng said in his address at her funeral, "Mrs. Doremus gave the whole of herself to the Lord, the whole of herself to the church, the whole of herself to every suffering heart she met, and yet the whole of herself to home and children."

Dr. Prime said, "I never felt the power of goodness, as I have felt it exemplified in the walk and life of that noble woman. I have the memoirs in my

library of nearly three thousand women, in dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and separate volumes, distinguished in many ages for deeds that have made their names illustrious in the annals of time. Among them there is not one, *no not one*, whose record is more bright and beautiful in the light of Heaven than hers. I never found in marble or on canvass, in history, or in poetry, one that embodied the idea of usefulness so perfectly as it was presented in the life work of this sainted woman,"

Dr. Ormiston said, "It seems to me that it pleased God to give her personally the choicest gifts, and rarest graces that she might show to what an altitude of beauty, womanhood in Christ can rise and manifest the perfection of Christian service, which was triumphant to the end."

Resolutions were passed by various Missionary and other societies, but none were more hearty and appreciative than the following, adopted by the General Executive Committee of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Meth. Ep. Church.

Resolved, That the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church would hereby pay an affectionate and reverential tribute to the memory of Mrs. T. C. Doremus, known and honored not only as the originator of the Woman's Union Missionary Society in this country, but as one of the most beautiful specimens of Christian womanhood and intense devotion to Christian work that has adorned the century, her name being as ointment poured forth, filling all churches and all lands with its perfume."

The Union Missionary Society has perpetuated her name in Calcutta, India, by calling their Home the "Doremus Home," but she lives to-day not only in the hearts of thousands of Christian people in this land, but in all lands, her name is as ointment poured forth.

Her daily prayer was, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" We can offer the same, and though not having the diversity of gifts that this consecrated woman had, yet we can do our part in helping the on-coming of our Redeemer's Kingdom.



